

**MINUTES
OF THE
CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
PLANNING BOARD
CRANBURY, NEW JERSEY
MIDDLESEX COUNTY**

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

The Meeting of the Cranbury Township Planning Board was held on October 5, 2023 at 7:00 pm at Town Hall, 23A North Main Street, Meeting Room.

CALL TO ORDER

Evelyn Spann, Vice-Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and presided over the meeting.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Under the Sunshine Law adequate notice in accordance with the open public meetings act was provided on January 11, 2023 of this meeting's date, time, place and the agenda was mailed to the Cranbury Press and Trenton Times, posted on the Township Bulletin Board, mailed to those requesting personal notice and filed with the municipal clerk.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

- ☒ Anderson, Deanna
- ☒ El-Badawi, Eman
- ☒ Ferrante, Michael
- ☒ Gittings, Bill
- ☒ Jones, Dominique
- ☐ Mildenberg, Jason
- ☒ Spann, Evelyn, Vice-Chairperson
- ☒ Stewart, Jason
- ☐ Wittman, Wayne, Chairperson

PROFESSIONALS IN ATTENDANCE

- ☒ Andrew Feranda, Traffic Engineer
- ☒ David Hoder, Board Engineer
- ☐ Elizabeth Leheny, Board Planner
- ☒ Sharon Dragan, Esquire, Board Attorney
- ☒ Robin Tillou, Planning Board Administrative Officer

MINUTES

September 7, 2023

Upon a motion from Ms. Jones and Mr. Ferrante offering a second, the September 7, 2023 minutes were unanimously approved by those eligible to vote.

APPLICATION

**PB385-23 Eldo Abide, DMD
2664 Route 130
Block 6, Lot 14.031 & 14.032 - HC (Highway Commercial) Zone
Request for Waiver of Site Plan Approval – Parking**

REPRESENTATIVES: Pricilla Triolo, Bittiger Elias Triolo & Diehl P.C, Attorney
Charles Osterkorn, Osterkorn Engineering Assoc., Engineer
John McCormack, P.T.O.E., Dynamic Engineering,
Traffic Engineer
Eldo Abide, Contract Purchaser of Property

EXHIBITS:

A-1 – Original Site Plan Resolution – 11/9/05
A-2 – Original Site Plan Approval Sheet 2 of A-2
A-3 – Use Line Plan By Ameritech Engineering 2002
A-4 – Plot Plan
A-5 – Photos of Site from All Angles
A-6 – Interior Flow of Building

Ms. Dragan announced that this application did not have to be noticed due to the request for a waiver of site plan and this Board does have jurisdiction to proceed.

Ms. Triolo introduced the application by stating the applicant would like to occupy part of a condominium property. The existing use was a bank, and the proposed use is a dentist office. Due to the change in use, the dentist's property requires six (6) additional spaces for a total of 15 spaces for their building only. The dentist's use is permitted in the zone.

Charles Osterkorn, Osterkorn Engineering, advised the Board of his credentials stating he had graduated from Newark College of Engineering with a degree in engineering and is licensed in planning, surveying and engineering in New Jersey. He has owned his own business for 35 years and appeared before 50 – 60 boards.

Vice-Chair Spann accepted Mr. Osterkorn's credentials.

Ms. Dragon swore in Mr. Osterkorn, Mr. McCormack and all the Board professionals.

Mr. Osterkorn explained that the bank and the restaurant buildings on the property are currently vacant.

Mr. Osterkorn displayed exhibits A1 – A-4. Referring to exhibit A-3 stating that the exhibit delineates the condominium property for the bank. The restaurant building is closest to South River Road and the remaining part of the surrounding area is common space and common parking. The property for this application is on the west side of the property closest to Route 130.

Mr. Osterkorn referred to exhibit A-4, Plot Plan - Osterkorn Engineering. The spaces proposed are marked 1 – 6 in the plan. The six (6) spaces will be provided adjacent to the canopy that was there for the drive-through of the existing bank. The drive-through is being proposed as a proposed covered lunch rest area. The common parking has directional arrows. There is a stop sign and crosswalk in their area with do not enter signs heading to the east. It is a one way out at the drive through. The proposal will make a better flow for traffic. It is currently one way.

Mr. Osterkorn displayed exhibit A-5 photos, explaining the different views for the photos. The middle three (3) are a panoramic view looking at the existing bank. The seventh picture is of the stop sign towards the common space. The last pictures are north on the side of the bank where there is a door and an ac unit.

Mr. Osterkorn explained there will be no proposed signs. There are no signs on the existing bank. Only the existing monument sign on Route 130.

Mr. Osterkorn advised that the minimum lot area required is 87,000 ft. and they have 96,000 ft. The lot frontage is 150 ft., and they have 150 ft. The front yard is 75 ft., and they have 102 ft. The minimum side yard is 20 ft., and they have 60.8 ft. The minimum rear yard is 35 ft., and they have two (2) front yards so that is not applicable. The impervious coverage maximum allowed is 60% and they have 51%. The maximum building height is 35 ft., and they are under 35 ft. The required parking is 87 spaces, and they are providing 92 with the proposed additional parking on the dental site. All spaces will be 9x18.

Ms. Dragan swore in Eldo Abide, contract purchaser, owner of the dentist's office and applicant.

Mr. Abide explained he is the contract purchaser who will be converting the bank into a dentist's office. His practice is a prosthodontist which is the restoration of missing teeth and aesthetic reconstruction. He does consent to have six (6) parking spaces behind the building. They will not be changing the architecture of the building. They will not be changing the windows or doors. The side door will be the staff entry. The staff will be himself and four (4) other staff members. There will be a receptionist, Office Manager, Assistant and dental hygienist. The hours will be 9 am – 7 pm M-F. Currently there are Saturday hours, but he plans to discontinue that and only have M-F hours. The medical waste is picked up by Waste Management

companies and complies with the law. It is a small practice that sees one (1) patient at a time and the hygienist sees one (1) patient at a time.

Mr. Abide went over Exhibit A-6 advising of the flow of the interior of the building.

John McCormack, Dynamic Engineering, Applicant's Traffic Engineer, advised of his credentials stating he has been practicing for 30 years now, his license is in good standing and has presented before hundreds of boards. He is a professional traffic engineer.

Vice-Chair Spann accepted Mr. McCormack's credentials.

Mr. McCormack advised of the traffic generation that is in his traffic report provided to the Board. The parking supply is up to industry standards. The trip generation conversion will be significantly less traffic than what it is currently with the bank. There will be 20% less traffic than the bank. The full movement driveway is not changing. They will be submitting a letter of no interest to the Department of Transportation (DOT) to concur with the DOT. There are currently nine (9) spaces with 77 spaces for the common spaces to bring the total currently required to 86 spaces. The dentist will require 15 spaces to bring the proposed total with the common spaces to 92 spaces. The Institute Transportation Engineering identifies parking demand as 54 spaces being required. The ULI would require 78 spaces, which is all less than what is required for Cranbury. They will give more room in the back and maintain the one-way operation. The back parking will be for staff only. There will be bollards provided for the buffers which will be provided a few feet away from the canopy area in each area. The spaces will be appropriately signed and striped to maintain the one way and make sure it is clear.

Mr. McCormack stated they could add a handicap space due to being a medical office, but the need is not there due to being a dentist's office. The one handicap space should be plenty. The requirement is to provide EV spaces if 26 spaces or more are proposed, so addition of EV space(s) are not required for this application. The applicant does not want to install a sidewalk around the rear of the building. They are using the back parking area for staff only and would prefer not to install a 6' sidewalk off the back of the building. It could cause a could be a drainage issue, and this will not be a high turnover patient population needing to provide a sidewalk.

Mr. McCormack mentioned a county application would not be needed due to the building not changing size and the use getting less traffic.

Mr. Hoder went over his completeness/review letter and would like the specs for the paint being used.

Mr. McCormack replied it will be thermoplastic.

Mr. Hoder feels they should get a letter of no interest from the county due to being on a county road.

Mr. Feranda asked if there is a maximum staff with growth of the business.

Mr. Abide stated there are no immediate plans for more staff members, but there may be one (1) more dentist added maximum eventually. The multiple rooms are for the different procedures needed.

Mr. Feranda advised the sidewalk would provide a pedestrian path and protect pedestrians from the vehicles around the building to get to the entrance and a path to get to the canopy. They should protect the building with curbing or a raised sidewalk. Striping out can also be provided behind the building so the vehicles can leave that room. Bollards should be placed on both ends of the columns from the existing drive through.

Mr. McCormack agreed and stated there would be a striped crosswalk adjacent to the building and bollards to protect the canopy columns.

Mr. Feranda asked why they did not go for a variance to not add the six (6) spaces, there is plenty of parking for the dentist office.

Mr. McCormack asked if they could put in banked parking to show they did provide the spaces that are needed and when it is necessary, they will implement the parking.

Ms. Triola stated there can be a provision to not have to immediately add the spaces until the zoning officer or fire official advises it is time to expand the parking and would be given 60 days when Cranbury directs the applicant to do so.

Ms. Spann stated the vacant restaurant may not eventually be a restaurant again as there are other permitted uses so it is not known what parking they may need.

Ms. Dragan mentioned making the spaces banked could be an option.

Ms. Jones agrees with the banked spaces.

Mr. Stewart asked who controls the condo parking.

Ms. Triola replied the members of the condominium.

Ms. Dragan advised the common areas are govern spaces as per the master deed.

Mr. Stewart asked if the reason for keeping the drive through structure is because it would be

costly to remove and it serves no purpose for you.

Mr. Abide replied yes.

Mr. Stewart asked if it would be confusing that there will be a tendency for cars to drive through the bay.

Ms. Triola stated there would be a bollard in the middle area of each bay.

Mr. Stewart asked about the signage to prevent vehicles from going the wrong way.

Mr. McCormack replied there is signage at the end that states do not enter.

Mr. Stewart stated he supports banked parking.

Mr. Hoder feels they should put spaces in and not be banked. It would make it complicated to honor a waiver of site plan to build nothing and possibly build them later.

Mr. Feranda stated there should be employee only signage, so no one cuts through.

Mr. McCormack agreed.

Ms. Triola suggested putting in the banked parking spaces when there is a trigger of the other building being occupied and needing spaces.

The Board agreed.

Mr. Hoder stated the banked parking and signage should be shown on a plan.

Ms. Triola advised they will provide a side by side of that.

Mr. Gittings stated if the drive-through stays as existing it will eventually start to look worn down. If this building was on Main Street, and if they wanted to convert the drive-through as they are proposing, there is no way the Board would approve that.

Ms. Triola stated the applicant will repair the drive-through.

Mr. Gittings would like to see landscaping around the canopy area. If the applicant turns the parking 90° it will take away the problem of parking against the building and the safety issue driving to the old bank lanes. The biggest concern is maintaining the drive-through and signage should be shown for the monument sign.

Ms. Jones stated she would agree to approving the parking plan and allowing the spaces to be banked. The plan should be sent to the Board Engineer to review as compliance with the conditions.

Ms. Spann stated the site needs to be cleaned up.

Mr. Feranda feels there should be nice-looking planters at either end of the drive-through and better parking configuration.

Five-minute break.

Ms. Triola advised the condition of approval can be to have a landscaping and banked plan that will work. They will add lights as needed and a sign plan for review and approval. They will rotate the four (4) spaces and put landscaping and parking in two (2) of the spaces that she had displayed on the exhibit and put landscaping and parking in those two (2) rotated to spaces by the canopy area. The landscaping will be placed and cut off at the canopy to provide improved landscaping.

Mr. Stewart and Mr. Gittings agree to approve the new plan.

Mr. Hoder reiterated that the approval will be the revised parking on a plan that will be along the line of N671648 around where the aisle is now at the common area of the south part of the site. They should provide planters or landscaping on both sides of the canopy and provide a closing of the drive aisles on the north side where the spaces are.

Mr. Feranda does not see a problem with the four (4) spaces on the bottom and closing off the drive-through circulation.

Mr. Gittings stated the applicant is agreeing to provide four (4) parking spaces directly accessed off the south aisle, remove all the paving around the drive through and plant that with landscaping as appropriate and put the remaining two (2) spots at the top.

Ms. Dragan explained that the Board will grant the request for a site plan waiver and the applicant will revise the parking space plan to move the four (4) spaces toward the south side and put plantings above the spaces and on other side there will be two (2) spaces with plantings below them. The engineer will look at the drainage to make sure there is no pondage posed anywhere. And the paint will be shown on the plan as thermoplastic.

MOTIONED TO APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS: Mr. Stewart

SECONDED: Mr. Ferrante

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Ms. Anderson, Ms. El-Badawi, Mr. Ferrante, Mr. Gittings, Ms. Jones,

Mr. Stewart, and Ms. Spann.

NAYS: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

MOTION PASSED

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Vice-Chair Spann opened the meeting to the public for any comments for items not on the agenda. With no public comment Vice-Chair Spann closed the public forum.

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ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

There being no further business, Ms. Jones made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Mr. Gittings, offering a second. By unanimous vote, the meeting was thereupon adjourned at 9:45 pm.

CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY

I, the undersigned, do at this moment certify;

That I am duly elected and secretary of the Cranbury Township Planning Board and that the minutes of the Planning Board, held on October 5, 2023, consisting of eight (8) pages, constitute a true and correct copy of the minutes of the said meeting.

IN WITNESS of which, I have hereunto subscribed my name to said Planning Board this November 3, 2023.

Robin Tillou

Robin Tillou, Administrative Officer

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